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Charlotte Roueché, London

## LOOKING FOR LATE ANTIQUE CEREMONIAL: EPHESOS AND APHRODISIAS

### Summary

The visitor to Aphrodisias and to Ephesos sees each city in its Late Antique form, largely unaltered by later developments. The inscriptions of this period are both few and rather brief, compared to the earlier period; but most of them are still to be found in their original context, which adds greatly to their value. Context is particularly important for understanding acclamations, which are often short and uninformative. At Aphrodisias, the discovery of the acclamations for Albinus – a sixth century benefactor – in their original context allowed them to be read and understood as a group, and to help us to see the role of acclamatory celebrations. A considerable number of acclamations – from the fifth, sixth and early seventh centuries – have been found at Ephesos; although most of them have been known for many years, it has not been realized that they are almost all still in their original positions. This can help us to understand the ceremonial use of the public areas of the city at this period. There may also be implications for the understanding of the many markings to be found on the paving at both cities – but this will require further research.

Late Antique epigraphy has not always received the attention which it deserves. For many decades late antique inscriptions suffered either from being published, unrecognized, among a mass of earlier material, or from being relegated to the end of a corpus of inscriptions, under headings such as ›Byzantine‹ or ›Miscellanea‹. It was, as so often, Louis Robert who did some of the most important work in recognizing late antique inscriptions and publishing them separately – most obviously in *Hellenica IV*, but also elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. In fact, the inscriptions of the late antique period – roughly the fourth to the early seventh centuries – are often particularly ill-served by publication in a corpus of inscriptions. In such a volume they may often lose their chief advantage, which is their context. At many sites, where texts of an early period are very likely to have been dislocated, the late antique inscriptions, even if they are few, and not very long, have the enormous advantage of frequently remaining in the positions where they were first inscribed. They can therefore offer us information of a different nature from that provided by some more loquacious texts about the functions of the areas where they are found.

These observations are particularly true of acclamations, texts which have tended to be treated with a certain amount of disdain. My interest in acclamations developed from the discovery, at Aphrodisias, of an almost unique series of inscribed acclamations, which are inscribed on a row of twenty columns at the west end of the area known as the 'Portico of Tiberius'. Several of the inscriptions had been seen earlier, out of context, and were of little or no interest; but when the full ensemble was uncovered, the acclamations turned out to form a coherent series, honouring a local citizen, Albinus<sup>2</sup>.

The order of the texts followed the order of other records, which survive in documents such as the acts of the church councils, of series of acclamations. Those records are clearly of events which actually took place; and it seems clear that the inscriptions honouring Albinus are also the record of the acclamations made on a particular occasion. They praise him from restoring the stoa on whose columns they are inscribed; it may be that the acclamations took place at a ceremony elsewhere, and were inscribed afterwards on the relevant monument.

<sup>1</sup> See L. Robert, *Hellenica IV* (1948) and, for example, the discussion of the inscriptions of Corinth, *Hellenica XI–XII* (1960) Chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup> Published most recently as no. 83 in: C. Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity* (1989); see also, for a fuller discussion: C. Roueché, *Acclamations in the later Roman empire: new evidence from Aphrodisias*, *JRS* 74, 1984, 181–199.

The important lesson of those inscriptions, therefore, is that inscribed acclamations should be read as the record of an actual event, rather than simply conventional formulae. In the case of those texts, as I have said, it is not certain where the ceremony of acclamation took place; I would like to think that it took place in front of the stoa where they are inscribed. It is, however, not necessary to assume this in order to explain the location of this particular group of texts; they may represent a record of the acclamations at a public assembly held – for example – in the Theatre, and subsequently inscribed on the building for which Albinus had been responsible. With other inscribed acclamations, however, such an explanation is not always possible.

At Aphrodisias, for example, a series of acclamations was found on the columns of the Tetrastoon which lies immediately east of the Theatre. These texts are very hard to decipher, because they are painted; moreover, there are several layers of texts, painted one on top of another. These suggest that acclamations were taking place frequently, and that one group could displace another: they are therefore best understood as acclamations for officials – most probably governors – who succeeded one another. These acclamations might have taken place in the Tetrastoon, or in the adjacent Theatre<sup>3</sup>.

Another group of acclamations at Aphrodisias is perhaps even more suggestive. The monumental Tetrapylon marks the point where the road to the Temple/Church crosses what is now identified as one of the main north-south routes across the city. It was clearly an important monument in Late Antiquity, when it was extensively reconstructed<sup>4</sup>. On the façade of the Tetrapylon which faces on to the street an elaborate monogram contains an acclamation of the Green faction. It can be deciphered as such because the same acclamation, written out in full, is found on a column which originally stood at the other side of the street<sup>5</sup>. There is no reason to associate the Green faction with the restoration of the Tetrapylon, nor are both acclamations on the Tetrapylon itself. Instead, they seem to be associated with that part of the street. I would therefore argue that the only reasonable hypothesis is that they record acclamations which were pronounced – whether on one specific occasion or on several – at this particular point. This would be compatible with what we know of the involvement of the 'factions' – the organisers of performers and partisans known as the Greens and the Blues – in public ceremonial in the late antique period<sup>6</sup>.

It was in order to test this hypothesis that I went to Ephesos in summer 1994<sup>7</sup>. At Ephesos we can see several major streets in the form in which they existed in Late Antiquity, and at Ephesos a large number of acclamations, particularly of the factions, have been found. Those which I had observed on previous visits did not appear to be informal graffiti, and I wished to record both where, exactly, they were, and how they were inscribed. The results were more satisfactory than I had dared to hope. Thanks to the meticulous Austrian records – and with the advice and guidance of several members of the team – I was able to find a very high proportion of the inscriptions for which I was looking. They create a very coherent impression. They are all concentrated in the area of the Marble Street or the southern part of the Embolos focussing, apparently, on the Hadrian Gate area.

No acclamations so far discovered at Ephesos can be associated with the Arcadiane. The series begins in front of the Theatre, where a monumental gateway marked the opening of the Marble Street. This bears carefully cut inscriptions on both sides, acclaiming, on one side, the *pious emperors* and on the other, *the Christian emperors and the Greens* (below, cat. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Roueché (note 2:1989) nos. 75 and (probably) 77–78.

<sup>4</sup> See the articles of U. Outschar, *Zur Baudekoration und typologischen Stellung des Tetrapylons*, and G. Paul, *Die Anastylose des Tetrapylons*, in: C. Roueché – R.R.R. Smith (eds.), *Aphrodisias Papers 3*, JRA Suppl. 20 (1996) 201–224.

<sup>5</sup> Roueché (note 2:1989) nos. 184 and 185.

<sup>6</sup> See C. Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias* (1993) chapter VIII.

<sup>7</sup> I would like to express my thanks to St. Karwiese, D. Knibbe, U. Outschar, P. Scherrer and H. Thür, together with the rest of the team, for their warm welcome and their generous help. I would also like to thank D. Feissel for supplementing my photographic records.

The west side of the Marble Street is largely taken up by the 'Neronian Basilica', whose importance in the late antique period is suggested by the survival of several inscribed copies of sixth century legislation in and around it. On the wall of the doorway leading from the Basilica to the Marble Street a substantial inscription – in letters 3.5 cm high – acclaimed the emperor Heraclius and his son Heraclius, together with the Greens (cat. 2). That inscription has not been seen for several decades; but it was balanced by several equivalent inscriptions on the colonnade (now partly in ruins) which faced the Basilica, on the east side of the street. At the northern end lies a fragment from a column which bore an acclamation for the Emperor Phokas and the Blues (cat. 3). At the southern end of this colonnade the columns have been re-erected; the sixth from the southern end bears an acclamation for an empress Eudocia (cat. 4); the southernmost bears an acclamation for Heraclius and his son Heraclius, here further described as *new Constantines* (cat. 6). The similarity of the two inscriptions makes it likely that they are contemporary, and that Eudocia is the wife of Heraclius, mother of the younger Heraclius. On the same column as no. 4, but further down, is an acclamation of the Theotokos (cat. 5); there is however no reason to associate the two inscriptions.

The traveller up the Marble Street was confronted at the end of it by the monumental Gate of Hadrian. The arcading over the central arch survives in part; the upper left hand corner block bears a large and well cut acclamation for *Christian emperors and the Greens* (cat. 7). The name of the Greens has been cut over the word *Blues*; this could reflect tensions between the factions, but it could reflect a simple error, and we do not have the equivalent text which must have balanced this at the other side of the arch. Three other fragments might carry associated acclamations (cat. 8, 9 and 10).

The Marble Street, therefore, is bounded at both ends by the same acclamation, of the Christian emperors and the Greens, which offers no certain date from the mid fifth century to the early seventh. The acclamations in the street all date from the early seventh century. One more acclamation of this period – again of Phokas and the Blues, apparently in identical terms to no. 3 – was on a column at the lower end of the Embolos, apparently at its junction with the Marble Street (cat. 11). This end of the Embolos was remodelled in Late Antiquity; a colonnade of low columns was created using drums of the columns from the Prytaneion – now restored to their original position. From these columns some of the large capitals survive; two of them were inscribed, in their volutes, with acclamations expressed in monograms – as that described above at Aphrodisias<sup>8</sup>. One acclamation is for the Greens, the other for the Greens and Christian emperors (cat. 12 and 13). The only other formally cut acclamation which should perhaps be associated with these is one for Christian emperors which has no provenance (cat. 15).

This group of known texts therefore acquires a great deal more interest when they are seen in their ensemble. They suggest very strongly that the Marble Street was the focal area for civic ceremonial, at least by the late sixth and early seventh centuries. It would be rash to assume that any of these texts are contemporary with one another unless they actually name the same rulers; they would seem more likely to represent practice over a considerable period. It would seem very likely that the acclamations of named emperors took place when, for example, the portrait of an emperor was received<sup>9</sup>; it is also likely that such acclamations would take place when a new piece of imperial legislation was announced – such as those inscribed in or near the Neronian Basilica. The easiest explanation of the locations of the different texts is that acclaiming groups – including, but perhaps not exclusively, members of the factions – stood in those particular positions to make their acclamations. If this is right, it suggests a situation, in sixth century Ephesos, very like that described in the tenth century, at Constantinople, in the *Book of Ceremonies*. These texts can therefore give us some idea of how the public space of the city was used in Late Antiquity. The fact that this reflects, in a very different format, the picture given in the great

<sup>8</sup> Roueché (note 2:1989) no. 185; and cf. also no. 186.

<sup>9</sup> On this see Roueché (note 6) 146, discussing the role of the factions on such occasions.

inscription of Vibius Salutaris<sup>10</sup>, is a useful reminder that late antique and Byzantine ceremonial sprang directly from the ceremonial of earlier centuries.

One point which it is important to stress – and which the illustrations should make plain – is that the acclamations so far discussed have been formal, carefully cut texts, not informal graffiti. There are also some informally cut acclamations of the factions at Ephesos (cat. 14, 16, 17), of which one may be significant. This is an acclamation for the Greens, cut on the paving of the Embolos (cat. 14). The interest of it is that it is inscribed next to one of the many circles which are found on the late antique paving in Ephesos, as at many other cities. I have discussed elsewhere – drawing on material from Aphrodisias – the possibility that these marks indicate where people – or groups – stood on particular occasions<sup>11</sup>. There is still a great deal of work to be done on this hypothesis – and on others which may further illuminate the use of civic space. But there is no doubt that the material from the great excavations at Ephesos is of cardinal importance in the understanding of these issues, and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity which I have had to study it.

## CATALOGUE OF ACCLAMATIONS

### Marble Street

1. IvE 2090, from FiE II (1912) 187 no. 90. Inscriptions on the doorposts at the entrance to the Marble Street just west of the Theatre. Seen by many visitors: see C. Curtius, *Hermes* 4, 1870, 36 no. 8; Wood, *Discoveries* 6; H. Grégoire, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure* (1922) (hereafter IGC) 114ter.

1. 1 Western post

On inner face, at 0.59 from the top; letters 0.03–0.04 m (pl. 5, 1).

Χριστια-  
νῶν βασιλέ-  
ων κ(αὶ) Πρασίμων  
πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη

1. 2 Eastern post

a. On inner face, at 0.63 m from the top; letters 0.025–0.035 m, cross 0.05 m (pl. 5, 2).

εὐσεβων  
βασιλέων  
πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη cross

b. On outer, south side, at top, with the final letter cut on moulding; letters 0.08 m; cut within a traced circle.

[...  
[πο]λλὰ τὰ ἔτη

1. 1: *Many years for Christian emperors and Greens!*

1. 2a: *Many years for pious emperors!*

1. 2b: ... ]many years!

2. IvE 1196, from Skizzenbuch 1391; R. Heberdey – J. Keil, *ÖJh* 10, 1907, Beibl. 70; not found again. Cut on the doorpost of the gateway from the Marble Street to the 'Neronian Basilica' on its west side: H. 1.09 m, W. 0.85 m, D. 0.83 m. Carefully cut letters, 0.035 m.

<sup>10</sup> See the full discussion by Rogers, *Identity* 19 ff. *passim*.

<sup>11</sup> C. Roueché, *Late Roman and Byzantine gameboards at Aphrodisias*, in: I. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games* (London, forthcoming).



cross 'Ηρακλήου καὶ  
 'Ηρακλήου τῶν θεω-  
 φυλάκτων ἡμῶν  
 δεσποτῶν καὶ  
 τὸν Πρασίνων  
 πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη cross

*Many years for Heraklios and Heraklios our god-protected lords, and for the Greens!*

3. IvE 1191a, from Skizzenbuch 1447; previously published by R. Heberdey – J. Keil, *ÖJh* 10, 1907, Beibl. 73, whence Grégoire, IGC 113bis. On the upper fragment of a small blue marble column (diam. 0.42 m) from the north end of the colonnade to the east of the Marble Street. Letters lunate, large: cross 0.07 m, letters 0.03–0.05 m; parts have been erased (pl. 5, 3).

cross [Φωκᾶ τῷ θεο]-  
 τε[φῇ καὶ] Βενέ]-  
 τοις [Κ(ύρι)ε βοή]θη-  
 vacat [ ? cov ...

*Lord help Phokas, crowned by God, and the Blues.*

4. IvE 317, from Skizzenbuch 1456; on 6<sup>th</sup> column from the southern end of the colonnade on the east side of the Marble Street (pl. 5, 4).

cross Εὐδοκίας  
 τῆς εὐσεβες-  
 τάτης ἡμῶν  
 δεσποίνης

[For] *Eudocia our most pious lady.*

5. IvE 1358, from Skizzenbuch 1455; previously published by H. Engelmann – D. Knibbe, *ÖJh* 52, 1980, 51 Nr. 95. On the same column as 4, lower down and not aligned with it; letters 0.015–0.02 m.

cross θεώτοκε  
 βοήθη τῇ  
 πόλει

*Theotokos, help the city!*

6. IvE 1195, from Skizzenbuch 1441; previously published by R. Heberdey – J. Keil, *ÖJh* 10, 1907, Beibl. 73, whence Grégoire, IGC 113. On a blue and white marble column, southernmost of the colonnade on the east side of the Marble Street, H. 3.50 m, diam. 0.49 m; now reerected: letters 0.25 m.

cross 'Ηρακλίου  
 καὶ 'Ηρακλίου  
 τῶν νέων Κων -  
 σταντίνων τῶν  
 θεοφυλάκτων  
 ἡμῶν δεσποτῶν

[For] *Heraklios and Heraklios, the new Constantines, our god-protected lords.*

## Gate of Hadrian

7. IvE 1192, 3, from Skizzenbuch 1028. Republished in FiE XI 1 (1989) 74–75 no. 4, whence SEG 39, no. 1187. A large corner block (1.04 m wide × 1.26 m high); now by the Gate of Hadrian. Letters, large and ornate, 0.07–0.08 m, set within an inscribed circle. Illustrated in FiE XI 1 (1989) 74 and pl. 26 fig. 58.

[Χρις]τις[ων]  
 βασιλέων  
 καὶ Πρατίνων  
 πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη

*Many years for Christian emperors and Greens!*

Line 1: Traces of three letters seen by Heberdey, none by me.

Line 3: ΠΡΑΤΙΝ written in a rasura; the letters below are not apparent. Heberdey B under Π, T under N.

Line 4: π: Heberdey saw an upright. Λ is written A, suggesting that errors are possible in this text.

8. Published in FiE XI 1 (1989) 73 no. 3, whence SEG 39, no. 1186; fragment from an architrave, inscribed on one fascia; apparently an erased surface. Letters 0.10 m, similar to 7 and 9; now near the Gate of Hadrian. Illustrated in FiE XI 1 (1989) pl. 25 fig. 53.

... εὐ]σεβ[...  
 ...]οι[...  
 ...]?pious [?emperors...

9. IvE 1192, 2, from Skizzenbuch 594. Found »in den byzantinischen Häusern südlich der byzantinischen Mauer, nahe dem Strassentor«; found again in 1998. Fragment from an architrave(?); H. 0.35 m, W. 0.79 m, D. 0.49 m; letters large, ornate, lunate, 0.105 m.

ὁρθοδό]ξων πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη cross

*Many years for [orthodox ?emperors ?Greens]*

10. IvE 1198, from Skizzenbuch 2037a, »Abhang des Bülbüldag, ca. 200 m südlich des ?-nymphaeums beim Oktogon«; not found again. Apparently a door post from an arched doorway, H. 0.75 m, W. 0.45 m, D. 0.29 m; letters clear, 0.037–0.043 m.

[Νικῶ]  
 ἡ τ[ύ]-  
 χη Πρ-  
 ατίνω-  
 v cross

*The fortune of Greens [triumphs]!*

## Embolos

11. IvE 1191b, from Skizzenbuch 1394; previously published by R. Heberdey – J. Keil, ÖJh 10, 1907, Beibl. 73, whence Grégoire, IGC 113ter. Found »bei der Biegung der östlich der Agora führenden Straße, bei der ersten der Säule, die die Kuretenlisten tragen.«; not found again. Upper part of a column, broken below; H. 0.60 m, diam. 0.43 m; letters 0.045 m; all have been erased.

cross Φωκᾶ τῷ  
θεωστεφῇ  
ἡμῶν δεσπ(οτῇ)  
καὶ Βενέτοις  
[Κ(ύρι)ε βο]ήθησον

[Lord] *help Phokas, crowned by God, and the Blues.*

**12 and 13.** Two from a series of large, simple column capitals, each with a monogram in two volutes. These originally stood on the 'Kuretes list' columns, in their phase of re-use here. Both are now standing at the bottom of the Embolos, facing the Gate of Hadrian.

**12.** IvE 1192, 1, from Skizzenbuch 1026, whence Grégoire, IGC 114bis. H. 0.44 m, W. 1.13 m, D. 1.02 m. There is a monogram in each volute (0.22 and 0.23 m), and a simple line of writing (0.025–0.03 m) on the face between the two (pl. 6, 1).

(ὀρθοδόξων) cross Χριστιανῶν β[α]σιλέων (Πρασίνων)

[For] *orthodox Christian emperors* [and] *Greens* or [For] *Christian emperors* ?[and] *orthodox Greens*.

**13.** Copied from Skizzenbuch 1029, not published in IvE; H. 0.46 m, W. 1.12 m, D. 1.15 m. There is a monogram in each volute (0.25 and 0.26 m) (pl. 6, 2).

(Νικᾶ ἡ τύχη) (τῶν Πρασίνων)

*The fortune of the Greens triumphs!*

**14.** IvE 1198, 2, from Skizzenbuch 2978. On the Embolos, immediately in front of and west of the statue of Aelia Flaccilla; on a paving stone. The writing is at right-angles to the street, and to be read from the east. Letters 0.035–0.05 m; to the left, a circle with 8 spokes, diam. 0.13 m. On the paving-stone to the east, a larger circle with four spokes, diam. 0.45 m. and a square with cross (pl. 6, 3).

Νικᾶ ἡ τύχη  
Πρασίνων

*The fortune of Greens triumphs!*

#### Other locations

**15.** IvE 4138, from Skizzenbuch 1205. Found just outside the north door into the Marienkirche; it is not of the right dimensions for the adjoining stoa, and seems almost certainly to have strayed into the area, where there are a lot of late burials. A small white marble column (H. 1.42 m, diam. 0.29 m) broken below. Letters clear, lunate, 0.04–0.05 m, line 5: 0.03 m. Cut within a traced circle. The last line is squeezed, suggesting? that the circle was cut before the inscription was made (pl. 6, 4, photograph D. Feissel).

cross Χριστι-  
ανῶν βα-  
σιλέων  
πολλὰ τὰ  
ἔτη

*Many years for Christian emperors!*

Line 2: Λ for A

Line 3: C for second E



**16.** IvE 1194, from Skizzenbuch 1643. On upper step from Agora into east colonnade, towards north end; cross 0.045 m, letters ave. 0.02 m.

Above, a simple gameboard (10 squares).

Below:

cross Νικᾱ ἡ τύχη τῶν Βενέτων

*The fortune of the Blues triumphs!*

**17.** IvE 1193, from Skizzenbuch 15. Found south(?) of Arcadiane; now in the store. A paving stone, or revetment plaque, with a slightly raised edge and rough back (0.43 × 0.30 × 0.06 m); letters very irregular and casual: 0.01–0.015 m (pl. 6, 5).

Νικᾱ ἡ τύχη τῶ-  
ν Βενετων

*The fortune of the Blues triumphs!*

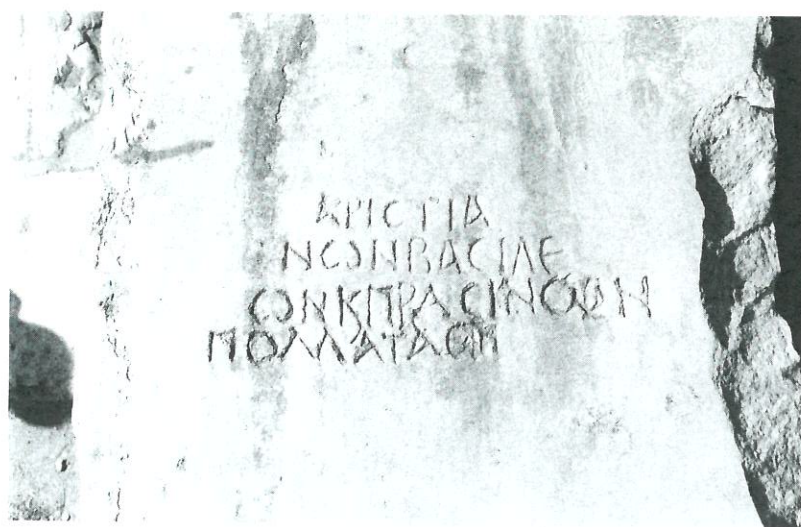
**18.** IvE 1198. 2, from Skizzenbuch 2839. On the steps between the Hadrian Temple and the Baths of Scholastica, at the eastern end. Very rough and worn.

Νικᾱ ἡ τύχη[η]  
[τῶν] Πρα[κίνων]

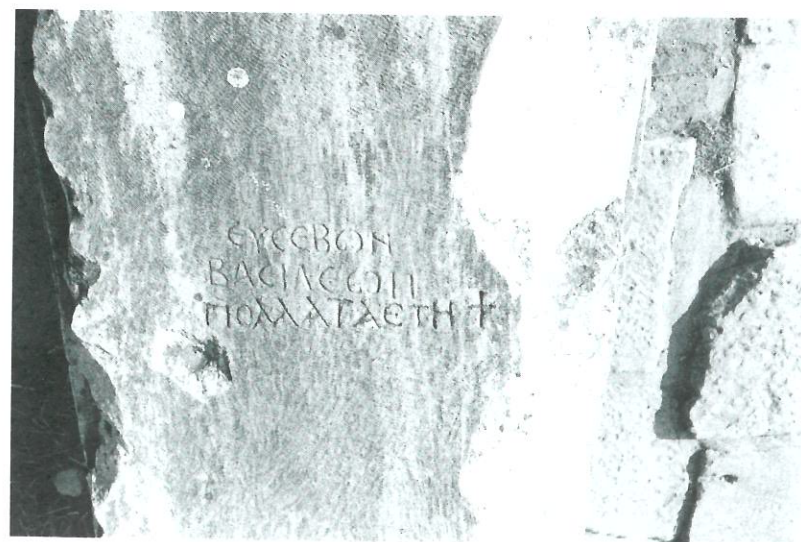
*The fortune of the Greens triumphs!*

**19.** IvE 1192, 4, from Skizzenbuch 1395. Seen at the lower end of the Embolos; not found again. A fragment of blue marble, H. 0.53 m, W. 0.38 m, letters 0.095 m. While this fragment might be interpreted as part of an acclamation – for emperors, or for the Blues, perhaps as Ch]ris[tian – this is far from certain.

...]ωNB[...  
...]PIC[...]



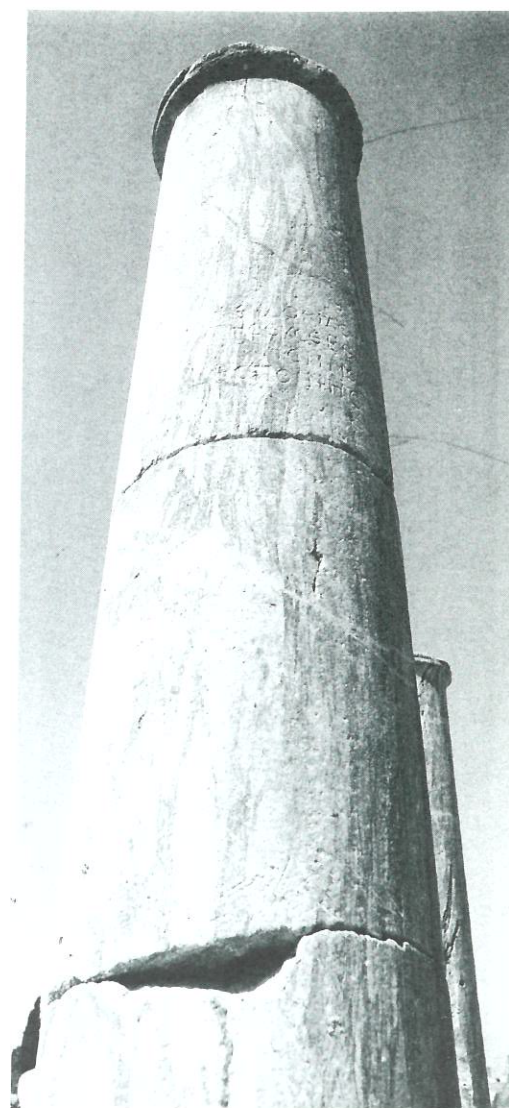
1 Acclamation 1. 1



2 Acclamation 1. 2a



3 Acclamation 3

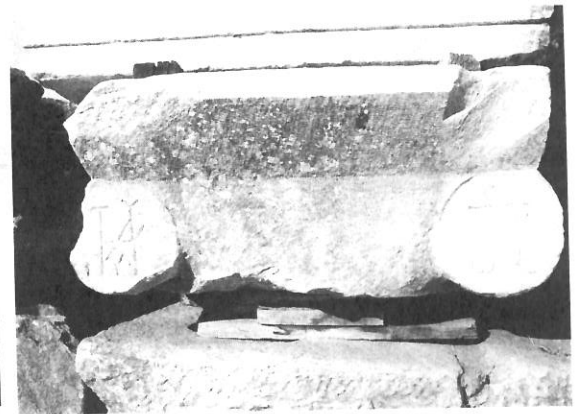


4 Acclamation 4

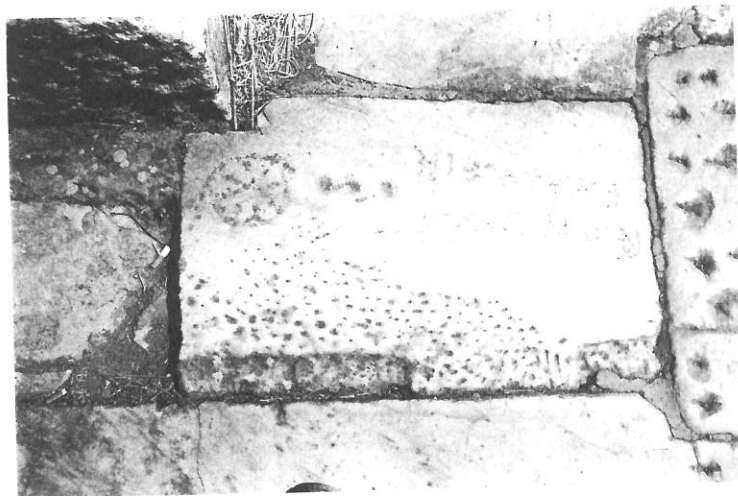




1 Acclamation 12



2 Acclamation 13



3 Acclamation 14



4 Acclamation 15



5 Acclamation 17